

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 L-03 COME-00 H-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

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APPROVED BY NEA:SSOBER

L/NEA:KHUFFMAN

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COMMERCE:RHULL (SUBS)

H:KJENKINS

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R 100110Z JUL 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 161739

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD, BDIS, PFOR, XF, IS, US

SUBJECT: ARAB BOYCOTT

1. EARLIER THIS YEAR, AN AMERICAN FIRM INTERESTED IN BIDDING ON A GOVERNMENT PROJECT IN JORDAN WAS ASKED BY THE CONTROLLER OF COMPANIES, MINISTRY OF NATIONAL ECONOMY IN AMMAN, TO SUBMIT AN AFFIDAVIT IN CONNECTION WITH THE FIRM'S PROPOSAL. IN ADDITION TO REQUESTING THE NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF THE FIRM'S DIRECTORS, THE AFFIDAVIT FORM REQUIRED THE US COMPANY TO AFFIRM AS FOLLOWS:

BEGIN QUOTE: ALL OF THE DIRECTORS OF THE ABOVENAMED COMPANY ARE OF THE (BLANK) NATIONALITY AND THAT NONE OF THEM BELONGS TO THE JEWISH FAITH. END QUOTE.

2. AS YOU ARE AWARE, FIRMS SEEKING TO DO BUSINESS WITH VARIOUS ARAB COUNTRIES HAVE FREQUENTLY BEEN REQUIRED TO SUBMIT INFORMATION REGARDING THE NATURE OF THEIR BUSINESS
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RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL. ARAB SPOKESMEN HAVE CONSISTENTLY

DENIED THAT ACTIONS UNDER THE ARAB BOYCOTT OF ISRAEL ARE INTENDED TO DISCRIMINATE AGAINST NON-ISRAELI FIRMS OR INDIVIDUALS ON THE GROUNDS OF RELIGION PER SE. THIS GENERAL SUBJECT HAS RECEIVED GREATLY INCREASED ATTENTION HERE IN THE COURSE OF THE PAST MONTHS.

3. AS YOU KNOW, IN ACCORDANCE WITH US POLICIES REFLECTED IN 1969 EXPORT ADMINISTRATION ACT, USG OPPOSES APPLICATION OF ANY BOYCOTT TO COUNTRY WITH WHICH WE HAVE FRIENDLY RELATIONS AND PARTICULARLY APPLICATION OF SECONDARY BOYCOTT TO US COMPANIES. CONSEQUENTLY, WE OPPOSE USE OF ALL AFFIDAVITS DESIGNED TO ENFORCE ARAB BOYCOTT. THIS OPPOSITION IS A MATTER OF RECORD, AND WE DO NOT NORMALLY PERCEIVE THE NEED TO REPEAT IT TO ARAB STATES. CONTENT OF ABOVE DESCRIBED AFFIDAVIT IS SUCH, HOWEVER, THAT IT REQUIRES SPECIAL ATTENTION.

4. WE BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT THAT PROMPT ACTION BE TAKEN BY GOJ TO PUT AN END TO USE OF AFFIDAVIT IN QUESTION INSOFAR AS IT DEALS WITH RELIGION. YOU SHOULD TAKE THIS MATTER UP WITH APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES, POINTING OUT THAT (A) OFFICIAL GOJ USE OF AN AFFIDAVIT PORTRAYING OUTRIGHT RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION HAS SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS FOR GOJ REPUTATION IN BOTH OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE CIRCLES IN US; (B) WE BELIEVE THAT DISCRIMINATION ON RELIGIOUS GROUNDS PER SE IS NOT IN ACCORD WITH GOJ POLICY; AND (C) WE ASSUME THAT RELIGIOUS QUESTION ON AFFIDAVIT REFERRED TO MAY HAVE BEEN ISOLATED CASE NOT KNOWN TO OR APPROVED BY HIGHER LEVELS OF GOJ AND WE WOULD APPRECIATE OFFICIAL JORDANIAN ASSURANCE THAT EFFECTIVE STEPS HAD BEEN TAKEN TO PREVENT RECURRENCE.

5. IF YOU BELIEVE IT USEFUL, YOU CAN INFORM GOJ THAT SUBSTANTIAL CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST IN ARAB BOYCOTT AND RELATED QUESTIONS IS REFLECTED IN NUMBER OF LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS NOW IN THE HOPPER. THERE HAS BEEN NO PUBLICITY AT ALL WITH REGARD TO THE RELIGIOUS QUESTION ON THE JORDANIAN AFFIDAVIT IN QUESTION, BUT IT CAN BE COUNTED AS CERTAIN THAT RECURRING USE OF SUCH AFFIDAVIT WOULD BECOME MATTER OF PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE AND WOULD PROBABLY PROVIDE CONFIDENTIAL

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FURTHER IMPETUS FOR CONGRESSIONAL ACTION.

6. BECAUSE OF CONFIDENTIALITY OF THIS PRIVILEGED COMMERCIAL INFORMATION UNDER US LAW, AMERICAN FIRM IN QUESTION CANNOT BE IDENTIFIED, AND YOU MAY SO INFORM GOJ IF NECESSARY. INGERSOLL

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